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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: 9/11 COVERAGE, AMBASSADOR TIP INTERVIEW,  
IRAQI RECONCILIATION, FALL PEACE CONFERENCE, ARAB INFIGHTING, U.S.  
TROOPS IN IRAQ

¶1. SUMMARY: All dailies carry Ambassador's 9/11 message; privately-owned "Al-Watan" and "Oman Tribune" interview Ambassador about Trafficking in Persons; in an editorial about 9/11, "Al-Watan" condemns the "beastly acts" of the American army that was unable to protect Americans despite consuming their tax dollars; "Al-Watan" says that true reconciliation in Iraq must happen internally; "Al-Watan" states that Arabs "learned their lesson" from Oslo and that maintaining a united Arab position on the Peace Process is more important than attending the fall peace conference; government-owned "Oman" calls for Arabs to take responsibility for their infighting and stop blaming others; "Al-Shabiba" says security in Iraq will not begin until foreign troops withdraw. END SUMMARY

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COVERAGE

¶2. Coverage of September 11 was muted in the local press, but all English and Arabic dailies carried the full text of Ambassador Grappo's message "September 11, Six Years On" (available on Embassy Muscat's homepage at [oman.usembassy.gov/september\\_11\\_six\\_years\\_on.html](http://oman.usembassy.gov/september_11_six_years_on.html)).

¶3. Arabic-language "Al-Watan" (privately owned, circulation 42,000) and its English-language sister publication "Oman Tribune" (circulation 8,000) featured an interview with Ambassador Grappo about Oman's Tier 3 ranking in the annual Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report. Both "Al-Watan" and "Oman Tribune" front paged the interview above the fold and ran the full text on interior pages with large color photographs of the Ambassador. "Oman Tribune's" headline read, "Oman-U.S. Ties Remain Unaffected by Rights Report." Al-Watan reported the same headline, with an additional quote from the Ambassador, "We Have Some Infractions."

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BLOCK QUOTES: POST 9/11 "NOTHING BUT LOSSES"

¶4. On September 11, "Al-Watan" published an editorial entitled, "History is the Best Judge:"  
"It is not difficult to see that a people can possess the most powerful army in the modern world, one that uses up hundreds of billions of dollars of the people's taxes, yet that army can fail to protect them from something like the September 11 attack... This is indeed what happened to the United States on that bloody day, and naturally its leadership looked for an enemy to fight and gain victory over, in order to treat the psychological shock to the

deepest part of its society... Now, six years after the beastly acts that the American army committed against innocent civilians, it is worth it for those who follow these events to review the scenario that led to the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq and the preparation to invade Iran, and also to consider the stab of the Israeli aggression against the Palestinian people, on the pretext that they are part of the 'terrorist resistance'... Since that day, the fact is that those who thought they were the most powerful were not, and armies who thought they could wage lethal attacks that would not harm civilians proved that this was an illusion. The politicians thought that force would accomplish their goals, and the narrow interests of insiders... They were wrong in what they attempted, which yielded nothing but clear losses... History is the best judge."

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IRAQI RECONCILIATION TRUE SOURCE OF STABILITY  
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¶5. On Monday, September 10, "Al-Watan" ran an editorial titled, "Reconciliation Is the Source of Iraqi Stability:"  
"At the security conference that was held in Baghdad yesterday the call prevailed for Iraq's neighbors to make more efforts to stop the bloodbath in Iraqi towns and cities. The conference also involved a repetition of previous warnings that internal Iraqi violence could spread to its neighbors if they do not intervene...but the reality is that the solution to Iraq must begin inside Iraq itself... The unlawful marriage between politics and the occupation in Iraq must end so that all of Iraq's groups and sects can take great steps to achieve quiet and stability."

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ARAB SOLIDARITY MORE IMPORTANT THAN FALL TALKS  
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¶6. On Friday, September 14, "Al-Watan" editorialized that "Arab Coordination Is More Important than the Fall Conference:"  
"Little by little the characteristics of the conference about peace

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in the Middle East that is set to be held in November are becoming clear. American President George W. Bush called for it... It gives the Arabs the impression that their cooperation in solving the American problem with Iraq and Iran will benefit them when it comes to the matter of Middle East peace. But Israel's agenda is completely different from Washington's. Israel has its own private agenda concerning Iraq and Iran, and Israel's agenda does not involve bearing the military, political, or economic losses that the Americans have suffered. The only important thing to the Israelis is implementing their own ambitions in the area...but the Arabs learned their lesson from Oslo, which was born under similar circumstances. And it did nothing to achieve the aspirations of the Arabs or the Palestinians, as we see and hear about with the unceasing aggression against the Arab peoples and Arab lands in Palestine, in Lebanon, and in Syria... Arab solidarity on its position holds out hope for the future peace of the Middle East, if the Arabs hold to the roots of the issue and never relinquish any established rights."

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ARAB INFIGHTING OBLITERATES ALL OPPORTUNITIES  
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¶7. On Sunday, September 16, government-owned "Oman" (circulation 38,000) ran an editorial entitled, "Arab Infighting Obliterates All Opportunities:"  
"The Arab world is experiencing some of its worst and most dangerous problems up to this point. The cause of this goes back to those people among the countries and peoples of this region who want to push it into strife between brothers...which leads to a weakening of Arabs' power and their capabilities, and confines them to a small arena of struggle and killing between brotherly sides, which opens the field to numerous difficulties and differences that surely do not benefit any Arab side... It is illogical to place the blame for all of this on the shoulders of others, especially for what we are doing with our hands."

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NO SECURITY UNTIL WITHDRAWAL  
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¶8. On September 16, privately owned Arabic-language "Al-Shabiba" (circulation 20,000) and its sister English-language daily "Times of

Oman" (circulation 25,000) ran a front-page article by editor-in-chief Essa bin Mohammed al Zedjali, in reaction to the testimony of Ambassador Crocker and General Petraeus:

"The whole world demands that foreign troops pull out from Iraq, leaving the responsibility of governance to the sons of Iraqi soil. The reason: they have not achieved the goals for which they came to Iraq. Killings have become an everyday affair in Iraq. The term 'security' signifies no meaning for the Iraqi citizens...[foreign troops] entered Iraq with promises of a prosperous and secure life but unfortunately they have not been translated into reality...Four years have passed since the entry of foreign troops in Iraq, but failure is writ large on their faces...opinion polls in most countries that have troops in Iraq have showed that their citizens are in favor of early withdrawal...the international community...looks forward to a total withdrawal of troops, paving the way for the Iraqis to fill the vacuum and govern their country with complete freedom."

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